LIBERTARIAN

No. 3

January, 1960

Published by the Libertarian Society at Sydney University

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"It is the province of logic to tell why a reasoning is false. It is the business of sociology to explain its wide acceptance."

VILFREDO PARETO.

MAX EASTMAN *

Max Eastman has been one of the leading critical thinkers and writers in America in this century. Amongst other things, he was the first to publicize Lenin's and Trotsky's ideas in America, and the first to give an informed account of developments in Soviet Russia. Eastman is also a poet and a well-known writer on literary and other questions—compare such books as "The Enjoyment of Poetry" and "The Enjoyment of Laughter" —but it is his political interests and his writings on Marxism that I want to deal with here.

An account of Eastman's background will help to make clear his role in America, both as a rebel and as a critical disseminator of new ideas. He was born in 1883, both his parents being Congregational ministers (his mother was one of the first women ministers in the U.S.A.). After taking his first degree at Williams College, he went to New York in 1907, and became a lecturer in Philosophy for four years at Columbia University. Here he learnt philosophy from, and was a personal friend of, John Dewey, the most famous American philosopher of his time. Eastman was influenced by Dewey, but appears never to have become a doctrinaire pragmatist; he seems rather to have got a habit of objectivity and an interest in scientific appraisal of facts, his pragmatism being limited to a special interest in the **results** of courses of action (though, as I will mention later, retention of this interest may help to explain Eastman's outlook to-day).

At any rate, Eastman was caught up in the ferment of intellectual and political ideas of those days; he saw through religion and became acquainted with Freudian ideas. Then, in 1912, he became editor of a struggling, avant-garde magazine, "The Masses". Under Eastman, the magazine blossomed, and in the next few years became the most influential left-wing magazine in America. Eastman himself crystallized his attitude of revolutionary protest; and became the leading figure amongst the left-wing writers and painters of Greenwich Village which was then first coming to be the Latin Quarter or Bohemian centre of New York.

It may be interesting to hear the stated policy of "The Masses":

> "This magazine is owned and published co-operatively by its editors. It has no dividends to pay, and nobody is trying to make money out of it. A revolutionary and not a reform magazine; a magazine with a sense of humour and no respect for the respectable; frank, arrogant, impertinent, searching for the true causes; a magazine directed against rigidity and dogma wherever it is found; printing what is too naked or true for a money-making press; a magazine whose final policy is to do as it pleases and conciliate nobody, not even its readers — there is a field for this publication in America." (Eastman: "Enjoyment of Living.")

From 1912-17, "The Masses" sponsored revolutionary and unorthodox views and activities. They supported all strikes and were highly regarded by the I.W.W. (Although connected with the Socialist Party, the magazine proceeded independently, e.g., it published Bill Haywood's statement when the Socialist Party expelled him.) They offended religious spokesmen and supporters of conventional morality all over America. (There was an especially huge outcry in 1916, when "The Masses" published a ballad on the theme of how kindly Joseph acted when Mary came home pregnant.) As a sample, here is Eastman's description of the contents for June, 1913:—

> "We endorsed the general strike in Belgium, supported the 'War in Paterson' (I.W.W. strike), backed Karl Liebknecht's fight against the Social Democratic majority in the German Reichstag, affirmed that the so-called 'bandits of Mexico' were the real patriots of the country, satirized the 'fifty-seven varieties of national religion', ridiculed an Old Testament story . . . An editorial reads: 'You don't believe in class struggle? Go out to Paterson and try to make a noise like a free citizen. That's all John Reed did, and he got twenty days in gaol. It's getting so you can't collect your thoughts without being arrested for unlawful assemblage.' "

As Eastman says of "The Masses": "What made us so 'objectionable' was not primarily our attack on capitalism — that question was still a trifle academic in America. But we voiced our attack in a manner that outraged patriotic, religious and matrimonial, to say nothing of ethical and aesthetic tastes and conventions. The state, the church, the press, marriage, organized charity, the liberals, the philanthropists, the Progressive Party—they were all game for our guns and always in season. And when the war started in Europe, that, too, was something to shoot at—and so was patriotism, 'preparedness' and the rising cult of the army over here." As a result, they were banned all over the place. As Eastman says: "We were kicked off the subway stands of New York, suppressed by the Magazine Distributing Company in Boston, ejected by the United News Company of Philadelphia, expelled from the Columbia University library and bookstore, stopped at the border of Canada, and swept out of colleges and libraries from Harvard to San Diego."

After America entered the war in 1917, "The Masses" was naturally suppressed as subversive, and Eastman had to fight court cases for a couple of years to keep out of gaol. But he started up at once with a second magazine, "The Liberator", which ran from 1918 until 1922. It was this magazine which was the sole sole source of non-hysterical information about developments in Russia. John Reed was one of Eastman's chief associates; Eastman raised the money for Reed to go to Russia, and published in "The Liberator" the articles which were later made into the book "Ten Days That Shook the World". Apart from Eastman and Reed, some of the other well-know contributors to "The Masses" and "The Liberator" were Maxim Gorky, Bertrand Russell, Sherwood Anderson, Carl Sandburg, John dos Passos and Edmund Wilson.

This, then, was Eastman's background when he himself sailed for Russia in 1922. He had supported Lenin and the Russian Revolution from the outset, though even as early as 1916 he had publicly distinguished within Marxism between what he regarded as its metaphysical or nonsensical element, and its scientific element. (In this we see the influence on Eastman of Dewey and a more commonsense philosophy.) As Eastman said on leaving America: I am "going over to find out whether what I have been saying is true". He was in Russia for two years, at a very interesting time, for in this period, 1922-24, Lenin died and the struggle for succession

*This, and the following two articles, are based on three papers delivered to the Libertarian Society on "Rebels and Renegades."

began to take place. What Eastman did was attend party congresses, talk to Bolsheviks and spend a lot of time in the Marx-Engels institute. He quickly learnt Russian, in which he was no doubt aided by the fact that while there he married a second time, to a Russian, Eliena Krylenko, whose brother, it is interesting to note, was an important Bolshevik. Krylenko, Eastman's brother-in-law, was a prosecutor in some of the earlier Stalin trials, and became People's Commissar for Justice, a position he held until 1937, in which year he disappeared without trace, but was described in Pravda as a "miserable traitor".

The result of Eastman's observations and researches was his book, "Marx, Lenin and the Science of Revolution", which was published in 1926. This book was the first sympathetic but critical account of Marxism and Leninism, and, in my opinion, is still the best introduction to the subject, even though many other books have been written, and of late the scholars have been trying to give their own critical accounts. For one thing, Eastman's literary powers make him always readable—in this respect he was never an academic; but, more important, unlike most of the scholars, Eastman had a really critical mind and did have insight into how social forces operate. At any rate, Eastman was certainly first in the field and it is remarkable how much it is to the point in this book written as long ago as 1925.

My account of this book will not be exhaustive and will rely mainly on quotations. The book consists of two parts, the first on "The Philosophy of Marxism", the second mainly on Lenin as a social engineer. Eastman's general thesis is that there is a tension in Marxism between metaphysics and science: In Marx the metaphysics predominated, but the practical genius of Lenin lay in his ability to make use of the scientific side of Marxism.

Eastman makes a direct and uncompromising attack on Marx's metaphysics, and brings out how much this metaphysics owes to Hegel. He outlines the general role in history of metaphysics or what he also calls animism, in contrast with the role of the scientific attitude, as follows:

> "As the practical work of the mind advances, religion weakens, the priest loses his authority. Then the metaphysician steps forward and builds a home for the soul out of the very instruments of that practical work of the mind . . . The task of the metaphysician, speaking very broadly, is to transplant into . . . empty abstractions that personal moral spirit, the defender of custom and established right, which is being driven out of the concrete world by the development of the scientific view . . .
>
> "The history of philosophy shows, of course, a confusing interplay of the two attitudes, the attempt to generalize science, and the metaphysicians art of implanting animism within the assumptions of science." (p. 34.)

He goes on, however, to point out that in one case "the metaphysician's art prevailed absolutely" in German philosophy, especially with Hegel. Eastman then goes on to criticize Hegel's philosophy as an example of what he calls "logic-theology".

What, then, was the position of Marx? He was converted to Hegel as a young man, but was "awakened out of this mystical condition" by the materialism of Feuerbach. But Marx, along with Engels, found that Feuerbach did not give a satisfactory account of the material world. As Eastman says:

> "They wanted to know that this material world is a going thing, just like the ideal world in which they had been brought up, and they wanted to know how it is going. Feuerbach could not tell them that. And so, instead of simply observing as a matter of evident fact that it is going, and taking up the long experimental-scientific labour of finding out how it is going in various specific parts, they went back to Hegel and got a piece of philosophy that would tell them how it is going abstractly, and universally, in advance of investigation, and without genuine verification. They went back and got the 'Dialectic'." (p. 23.)

That is, as Eastman argues in detail, dialectical materialism, the philosophical basis of Marxism, is essentially a piece of animistic metaphysics; it reads into the world Marx's own wishes and ideals by replacing an unverifiable Hegelian idealism by an equally unverifiable Hegelian materialism.

And yet for all this, Eastman argues, there is in Marx a **matter of fact** account of history and revolution; hence the problem as Eastman expresses it:

> "We have to choose between Marxism as a Hegelian philosophy, and Marxism as a science which is capable of explaining such philosophy." (p. 46).

Eastman discusses this conflict as it emerges in various parts of Marxism. Take for example, Marx's interpretation of history. Eastman points out the metaphysical character of the theory of contradictions, of the view that the working class will **inevitably** overthrow the ruling class, which leads Marx constantly to speak of a social revolution as if it were a contradiction between two metaphysical generalities. Or, as a more special objection, Eastman comments on how Marx freely interchanges the words "condition" and "determine". He points out that making use of this kind of ambiguity

> "is a familiar method of metaphysics, but it has nothing to do with science. A theory which ignores the difference between the verbs **condition** and **determine** cannot be called scientific, because it has not sufficient exactitude to be verified." (pp. 50-51).

In the same vein, Eastman comments on the metaphysical nature of Marxist statements about freedom and necessity, historical accidents, and about men being able to change the speed but not the direction of historical developments. He points out that these are metaphysical views for the quite good reason that they are unfalsifiable in principle—anything counts as evidence in favour of them, nothing counts as evidence against them. To take a very specific instance of this kind of reasoning, Eastman cites the Communist attempt (by Trotsky) to explain futurism in art as a "reflection" of the unheard of capitalist boom. The basis for this explanation is pure metaphysics. For suppose, instead, we took it seriously and scientifically. Then, as Eastman says:

> "In order really to explain futurist art upon the basis of an economic boom, you would have to show that actual artists, or the artist class, were in a position where, in order to get a good share of the benefits of the boom, they were led to make pictures and write poems that were a 'reflection' of it. And you would find it more easy to prove the opposite thesis. What artists are best paid for during an industrial boom, is keeping the idle thoughts of the public occupied with Eternal Beauty and holding fast to the old ideas of wealth and power." (p. 53).

This side of Marxism Eastman wants to contrast sharply with what he regards as the scientific and practical side of Marxism. Compare, for example, the following comment on economic determinism:

"Another way, and a far more promising one, if they could be held to it, is to declare that Economic Determinism is only a 'principle of investigation'. It is difficult to understand how anybody could make this statement, as orthodox Marxians very often do, and at the same time assert that economic determinism is an ultimate and irrefutable philosophy of history. The explanation lies in a fact already mentioned, and which the reader of this book must bear continually in mind—namely, that Marxism is not a pure and natural metaphysics. Marxism is a seventy-five years' struggle between metaphysics and an instinctive practical-scientific realism, in which metaphysics carried the day. A critic is compelled to do some violence to the practically realistic side of this struggle. He is compelled to set Marxism back clearly and definitely into that metaphysical frame from which it did not, in the long run, escape. The idea that economic determinism is merely a 'principle of investigation', was one of the momentary victories of practical science." (pp. 53-54).

One of the most interesting sections of Eastman's book is his discussion of the theory of ideology which he rightly regards as one of Marx's most important positive contributions. He brings out for the first time the significant resemblance here between Marx's views and those of Freud; the affinity, that is, between what Freud says about unconscious motives, rationalization and so on, and what Marx says about ideology, as when he speaks of beliefs, especially religious, metaphysical, moral and political beliefs, as expressing disguised, distorted or unconscious interests.

But again, Eastman is able to show that this part of Marx is in conflict with his metaphysics. For the theory of ideology depends on making a sharp distinction between ideology and science; but according to the metaphysical theory of "reflections", scientific ideas, like any other ideas, are merely reflections of economic forces, so that the original distinction is blurred, and science itself becomes a form of ideology. And here it is significant, as Eastman notes, that with Lenin and Trotsky (and, of course, since then with Stalin and Kruschev) the word "ideology" "retains not the slightest tincture of meaning it had for Marx and Engels. For them it was the ultimate form of intellectual abuse". (p. 75). But Russian Marxists speak indifferently of "religious ideology", "scientific ideology", "bourgeois ideology" and "proletarian ideology".

So that is how Eastman saw Marxist theory in 1925: As containing a scientific and practical element which was largely obscured by metaphysics, by Marx's failure to recognize the ideological character of much of his own work.

In the second part of the book (on revolutionary engineering), Eastman begins by referring to the contribution to revolutionary thought made by anarchism and syndicalism, and he speaks favourably of the genuinely scientific character of some of Kropotkin's studies (in contrast with those of Marx), and he also says the following:

"Another matter in which the anarchists are in advance of the Marxists is their conscious renunciation of metaphysics, their unfulfilled but real aspiration toward a practical scientific attitude. Bakunin's early protest against the 'everlasting theoretical insanity' of Karl Marx, runs through all the great anarchist literature, and is essentially wise and just. It is the protest of all simple minds, with a healthy love for clarity and directness, against tangling up the real act of revolution in the unreal and awful ponderosities of German metaphysics." (p. 131).

However, Eastman goes on to point out that the anarchists and syndicalists were completely Utopian and unpractical when it came to indicating the methods by which revolution could be achieved. This job was left to Lenin, working from a Marxist background.

Eastman's view of Lenin, in brief, was as follows: Lenin was essentially a hard-headed, scientific revolutionary, whose practical achievement was to ignore the metaphysical part of Marxism. It is true that no one was more doctrinaire than Lenin in claiming always to speak in the name of Marx; but what this amounted to was Lenin's capacity to twist Marx's views in ways that suited him, a capacity admirably aided by the very conception of dialectical logic. What Lenin actually did was to regard revolutionary engineering as a practical problem, and in solving it, he drew not only on Marx, but on professional revolutionaries such as Blanqui.

"Lenin was accused by other Marxists of 'Jacobinism' and 'Blanquism' . . . and I think this accusation should have been accepted." (p. 144).

That is, Eastman regards as scientific engineering, Lenin's conception (as in "What Is to be Done") of a centralized organization of disciplined professional revolutionaries, and his readiness to exclude, entirely, any supporters who did not "mean business" or were not prepared to accept organizational discipline. Similarly, it was Lenin's practical sense which led him to support socialism in a backward country and to make use of the peasantry when is suited—by the judicious appeal to Marx quotations, Lenin could always make it appear that his procedure was orthodox, but, in fact, he was breaking new ground.

Eastman's view of Lenin and Marx is summed up when he maintains that Marx's characteristic way of talking about revolution was to speak impersonally of the inevitable victory of the proletariat, whereas Lenin characteristically speaks of action, of **transforming** the proletariat into the victorious class. Eastman says:

"Marx attributes his purpose to the external world . . . Lenin assumes that the revolutionary purpose exists in revolutionary people, and shows them those facts in the external world, and those methods of action, which makes its realization possible." (p. 168).

This, then, was Eastman's view in 1925. Then he was very sympathetic to Lenin and Soviet Russia; although he did write one chapter worrying about the growth of bureaucracy, he thought freedom, justice and so on were on the way. In this he was completely mistaken. But it is remarkable how Eastman's book provides the materials for a sound account, not only of Marx, but also of Lenin. Excise the value judgments in favour of Lenin, and what you have is a factual account of how Lenin came to power, and, further, the materials for explaining how the Stalinist development could quite naturally come about. Lenin was an extraordinary social engineer, methods like his probably were necessary for the Bolsheviks to obtain power; only what Lenin was in fact engineering was not what he believed and claimed to be engineering. Moreover, the difficulty Eastman has to skate over, how could Lenin, the practical engineer, talk so much in terms of Marxist metaphysics, practically invites us to adopt a different hypothesis, namely that Marxist metaphysics was precisely the sort of ideology Lenin and the Bolsheviks had to have to disguise from themselves and their supporters what they were really doing when

they captured power in Russia.

However, Eastman quickly saw through his own optimism about Russia. While in Russia, he had come to know Trotsky personally and could see the direction in which the Stalinist forces would try to move. Indeed, Eastman was the man who first made known to the West the existence and contents of the document known as Lenin's Testament. This was Lenin's assessment of Trotsky, Stalin and other Bolsheviks, and contained a postscript urging the General Committee to dismiss Stalin from his post of General Secretary. Trotsky had told Eastman the contents, and Eastman first referred to the Testament in the book on Russia he published in 1925, "Since Lenin Died". Trotsky, under pressure in Moscow, then disowned Eastman and denied the existence of the Testament. But later Trotsky admitted its authenticity. Not till Kruschev's famous speech were the facts about Lenin's Testament officially admitted by Communists.

From 1924 to 1927 Eastman was in Europe. When he returned to New York in 1927, he was no longer a leader or a favourite of the intellectual left-wing. Because of the spread of Stalinist ideas there, Eastman was, on the contrary, branded a traitor and a Trotskyist. Hence began a long period of intellectual isolation, during which Eastman again revealed his capacities as an independent and critical thinker. Apart from continuing his literary work, he became the English translator of such works of Trotsky as "The History of the Russian Revolution" and "The Revolution Betrayed". In 1934 he wrote an essay called "The Last Stand of Dialectic Materialism", in which he developed some of his criticisms of Marx. The essay was written to criticize a view held at that time by Sidney Hook, according to which the metaphysics of Marxism came only from Engels, Marx himself being really a precursor of the scientific pragmatism of Dewey. But Eastman trenchantly (and correctly) argued that Hook's view hadn't a leg to stand on.

In the 'thirties, Eastman wrote various articles in which he became progressively more critical of Russia, and at the end of the decade he wrote a book called "Stalin's Russia and the Crisis in Socialism". In this he presented and indictment of Stalinism which is much more widely accepted to-day than it was at that time. That is, Eastman drew attention to the highly authoritarian character of the Russian system, to the fact that a new type of class exploitation had replaced the old, and he pointed out (what was by no means generally accepted then) that the charges made against the purged Bolsheviks were obvious fabrications. Eastman thus made many points similar to those made in Trotsky's "The Revolution Betrayed"; but he went further than Trotsky by denying that Russia was in any sense a worker's state and by arguing that Stalinism was a natural consequence of (a) the Bolshevik method of organization and control and (b) the Bolshevik willingness completely to a subordinate means to ends—both of which, Trotsky, following Lenin, had accepted. In other words, Eastman now wanted to defend workers' democracy, or a conception of socialism which rejected altogether Bolshevik ideas and methods. But in the book Eastman shows that he is worried about whether such a conception of socialism could be other than Utopian.

In the same year, 1940, another book by Eastman on Marxism was published. This was called "Marxism, Is It Science?". This is a revised version of "Marx, Lenin and the Science of Revolution", marred, it is true, by a rather journalistic opening, but it is not always realized how closely it follows the original version. Of the 24 chapters in the first book, 15 are reproduced almost word for word the same, some interesting chapters of the first book are omitted, and two other chapters are replaced by some fresh and more detailed material on the metaphysics of Marxism in the second book. The main difference between the two books is that Eastman's value or approval statements have been changed. In "Marxism, Is It Science?" he excises his Utopian sympathies for Lenin and Russia and recognizes explicitly that none of the Bolshevik ideals about freedom and justice were in fact achieved. Indeed, the fact that it was easy for Eastman to retain so much of what he said in "Marx, Lenin and the Science of Revolution" verifies what I said about that book's being a remarkable, early, critical assessment of Marxism.

This, then, was Max Eastman in 1940, at the end of his period of isolation: the independent critical thinker, willing to do the salutary, but then unpopular, work of exposing Marxism and Communism, not from the standpoint of bourgeois conformity, but from the standpoint of tough-minded protest. As Edmund Wilson suggested in his essay, "Max Eastman in 1941",

> Eastman was a sort of stimulating odd man out. He was "the unpopular foreigner who opens the window on the Russian train; the indiscreet guest who saves the banquet by making fun of the guest of honour; the rude and ill-regarded professor whose courses the brighter students all find out they have to take." ("Classics and Commercials," p. 69).

That one would like to be the final picture of Eastman. But, unfortunately, he has continued to develop since 1941. The line of development is indicated by the following favourable comment on Eastman by an editor in 1947:

> Eastman was earlier in his career described "as 'a notable apostle of Communism, the friend of Trotsky and a critic of the present regime in Russia'. In the meantime, Eastman has risen in the world of freedom by becoming a 'roving editor' of **The Reader's Digest.** He is still 'a critic of the present regime in Russia', but, as roving editor of **The Reader's Digest,** no longer a 'notable apostle of Communism'." (From "Man and the State", edited by William Ebenstein, pp. 18-19).

The new position Eastman has come to is revealed by his book, "Reflections on the Failure of Socialism", published in 1955. This book, from any point of view, is a shocking piece of work. Only one chapter, I would say, has anything like his old style and content, that on "The Delinquent Liberals", in which he examines the mentality of fellow-travellers like Laski, and gives reasons why they hung on for so long to their myths about Russia. What is most obvious from the book as a whole, is Eastman's loss of taste and logical powers. Now and then he does have genuine points to make but they are obscured by a crude and sophistical style of arguing which seems to be characteristic even of able people who write for the conformist press. The other notable thing about the book is the type of view it defends. Eastman wants to make what are, let us say, sound criticisms of Communism, but by a now familiar process they are identified with pro-American views; protest against anything except Russia seems to disappear altogether. To pick deliberately on some of the worst examples: on the very first page we find him speaking of De Gasperi's "strong and wise government" in Italy, referring approvingly to "the miracle of German recovery", and attacking Britain for recognizing Communist China. There is a chapter in which he literally defends capitalism in terms of "Don't kill the goose which lays the golden eggs". Then there

is a pathetic chapter in which he considers what people like himself should call themselves, and argues earnestly about which is the most suitable amongst such labels as "true liberal", liberal conservative" and "radical conservative".

This move from critical rebel to uncritical renegade is at first sight rather surprising in Eastman's case, since he differed in an important respect from the nowadays large class of conformist ex-rebels. He was an independent critic of Marxism from the outset, he never became a Trotskyist, let alone a supporter of Stalin, and it did not take the Great Purges or the Stalin-Hitler Pact to make him see through Russia. In this, Eastman contrasts with people such as Burnham, Koestler, Hook and Anderson. As a result, we might have expected Eastman, the lonely but tough-minded critic of the 'thirties, to continue in the same role in the 'forties and 'fifties. Since his Communist neurosis had never been severe, we should have expected a less severe cure.

The puzzle is, I think, solved when we notice that there is something common to all phases of Eastman's work, viz., a persistent interest in reforming or helping the world. This is obvious in his early work, but, as I mentioned, even in the 'thirties he believed in a socialism of a non-communist kind. There are connections here with his rather high-minded religious background, and with pragmatism, i.e., with his view that to have a belief inevitably leads to having a positive programme of action. Accordingly, when all hope of genuine socialism has obviously gone, Eastman's interest in the state of the world, in the common good as it were, impels him to find hope in something, and this turns out to be American democracy, or, in his own words, "our free, rational, kindly and democratic way of life".

JIM BAKER.

"How could a so-called scientific socialism conflict, to such a point, with facts? The answer is easy: it was not scientific."

ALBERT CAMUS.

JOHN DOS PASSOS

The following apologia for his lifetime up-to-date was given in 1941 by John dos Passos, an American novelist of fair notoriety then engaged on a journalistic mission to England.

"In the towns and cities they knew young men found the phraseology of our political heritage, dribbling greasily from the mouths of wardheelers, spellbinding the greenhorns, or else polished and smooth and meaningless in the after-dinner speeches of the respectable starched-shirt candidates for office . . . It was inevitable that the first impulse of any fresh young intelligence was to throw the whole business overboard lock, stock and barrel . . . The history of the political notions of American intellectuals during the past twenty years, is largely a record of how far the fervour of their hopes of a better world could blind them to the realities under their noses . . .

"In contrast to the agony of Europe, it began to be apparent that our poor old provincial American order, whatever it was, was standing up fairly well. Maybe the republic was something more than a painted dropcurtain hiding the babyeating Moloch of monopoly capital. Maybe there was something more than campaign oratory and poker-playing and pork and dummy bank accounts behind those Graeco-Roman colonnades.

"How are these doubts to be answered? I myself believe that . . . our peculiar institutions have a future, and that this country is getting to be a better place for men to live in instead of a worse; but unfortunately, just putting the statement down on paper does not make it true."

This extract would be valuable as a text for illustrating the elementary chicane of liberal journalism: the solidarity assumption, the melodramatising of the other case, the substitution of psychological for social argument (that well-known "fervour" of "young men"). Its author would have made short work of it ten years before. He is one of the few men who, amid the recent sophistication of American political attitudes, might have been supposed to remain his old, callow self, and the story of how he did not is cautionary.

Dos Passos' radicalism was not made easy for him. His father was a corporation lawyer and his mother's family had been a long time in Maryland. He travelled to Mexico and Europe with them, had a year at an English public school, and finished off at Harvard. He wanted to be an architect and chose Spain as the place to study: there the war caught up with him. First he drove an ambulance, later fought as a private, but the book he wrote about this, "One Man's Initiation" (1917), was romantic and bad, in a style turgid even for a twenty-year-old; the calamity of war was symbolised by the destruction of the cathedral at Linoges, which Dos Passos viewed as a blow to architecture. "Three Soldiers", some years later, is technically improved, but the attitude to war has not changed: an intelligent and sensitive young man would like to have been a composer, dies in battle, and this is a great loss. Dos Passos looked more of a poet than a novelist. In these books he shows a keen apprehension of beauty and is in earnest, but does not try to do much more than assert himself as the artist in an indifferent world. A book of poems followed. It seems that dos Passos must have learned about his shortcomings and set about to rectify them: his first good book, "Rosinante to the Road Again", is a simple observation, and account of his wanderings in Spain; the style is flatter and less resonant. There is a number of essays on Spanish poetry, and writers whom dos Passos met: one was Pio Baroja, a novelist of action and violence, born into the middle-class, whose adopted philosophy of anarchism appealed to dos Passos.

"He says . . . that the only part a man of the middle-classes can play in the re-organization of society is destructive. He has not undergone the discipline which can come only from common slavery in the industrial machine, necessary for a builder. His slavery has been an isolated slavery which has unfitted him forever from becoming truly part of a community. He can use the exact power of knowledge which training has given him in only one way. His great mission is to put the acid test to existing institutions, and to strip the veils off them."

Dos Passos has never masqueraded as a proletarian, nor has he claimed a mainly proletarian audience. "Working people, underdogs, reds, know instinctively what is going on." The middle-class prophet was needed in his own country.

In the next few years, he set about his self-imposed task with a lot of early difficulty: working self-consciously, striving to get the hang of a society which was so vast that one could dwell in a single recess of it and never speculate about the rest. He sniped at his old rich-boy habitat with a mediocre novel about Boston and Harvard. By 1925, when "Manhattan Transfer" appeared and dos Passos was twenty-nine, he had taken America as his symbol, and his style, over-effusive yet, was slangy and American and raw. Even at his angriest with it, dos Passos had admired his country and responded to its "bigness": he is the most national of writers: whatever happens in America, whatever you feel about it, it is significant because America is the top of the world.

"Manhattan Transfer" is a much expanded "One Man's Initiation". The concern for individuals is there: the protagonist is still a slice of dos Passos himself: but the prevalent note of frustration is less nostalgic, less prone and sentimental: there is a recognition of social powers: the writer has taken a step away from his characters and it is not the viewpoint but the panorama that has changed. It is one of those familiar seeking-after-what novels. The residue of liberal individualism is there. Dos Passos might never have written anything like "U.S.A." had he not himself been caught up in political action.

This was over the Sacco-Vanzetti case. Two migrant workmen, who happened to be anarchists, were found guilty in 1921 of a murder which they had not done. They were kept in prison for another six years before being executed, while petitions continued for a re-trial. In 1925, a Portugese, in gaol, confessed to the murder and cleared Sacco and Vanzetti, but his evidence was held not to warrant a re-trial. Dos Passos was one of many liberal writers who interceded. In December, 1926,

he published a pamphlet, "Facing the Chair", which Sacco mentioned with approval in one of his letters. The Governor of Massachusetts refused to commute the sentence, and execution was fixed for a day in August, 1927. Dos Passos stood in picket-line and was arrested. Sacco and Vanzetti were reprieved for twelve days, and there was no second reprieve.

Vanzetti was a courageous and, in his own form of English, highly articulate man. His and Sacco's letters were published and so were their pre-execution speeches and other reported statements of Vanzetti. In his most moving subsequent work, the "Camera Eye" sequences of the third volume of "U.S.A.", dos Passos frequently returns to the rhythm and atmosphere of those speeches.

Through his activities at this time, dos Passos formed an association with the political left-wing. He became one of a group of Communists and near-Communists who called themselves the "New Playwrights" and wrote for an experimental theatre. In "Airways, Inc.", 1928, dos Passos further modified his style. The only characters of the play to speak with any vigour and feeling are the strikers and those sympathetic to them. The other dialogue is a series of cliches, ironically inserted wherever the action flows fastest. In his next works, dos Passos as author will pass no judgment on his characters. He lets them stand revealed out of their own mouths. "Above all, U.S.A. is the speech of the people."

For the few years of his maturity, dos Passos had been busy extending his range as a novelist; he met the Communists without having read Marx. In 1928 he went to Russia and read "Capital." What most impressed him was the scope of them both. "Someone's got to have the size to Marxianise the American tradition before you can sell the American worker on the social revolution. Or else Americanise Marx." Back in America, he joined the National Committee for the Defence of Political Prisoners and wrote a pamphlet, "Harlan Miners Speak: Report on Terrorism in the Kentucky Coal Fields." It is the same Harlan of which the folk-song tells:

"They say in Harlan county there are no neutrals there—
You either are a union man or a thug for J. H. Blair."

"U.S.A." was issued in three volumes over six years, 1930-36. The first volume was submitted by dos Passos to the Communist "New Masses" as a premium on a subscription. Its advent was hailed by relatively few critics; notably by Edmund Wilson, who had noticed dos Passos early. Subsequently, the only influential critic whom I know of to have praised the work as unreservedly as Wilson was, surprisingly, Jean-Paul Sartre. Time has not helped the reputation of "U.S.A." It is hard to buy. Its technique is said to be out of date. What it implies about American society, being pessimistic, is, therefore, not quite defensible. It is propagandist; one's attitude to the characters is such as may inspire political conclusions. It would have been a better book if not so big a one. Dos Passos, by his attitude since writing it, has himself lent very little sanction to whoever would like to praise his book.

This is his mature work and one of the most ambitious of all literary undertakings. It had taken dos Passos thirteen years to isolate the theme which is only jibbed at in his early, crippled work, and in the rest of modish contemporary literature. The main part of the book consists of twelve biographies. Characters are introduced as children; we know about their home-life, their early temperaments and what they are disposed to do; then by simple chronicle, without having to take the author's word for anything, we follow them into their mature lives and watch them gradually acquire their social roles. The effect is astounding. What we have, at epic length, is an anti-epic, in moderate and American tones, of the impotence of single persons against the aggregate of persons, of what becomes of individuals when they leave contemplation before the mirror and engage in even the most innocent of social activity. Dos Passos treats of the will and of people's intentions, but only to show that what happens has nothing to do with what people want to happen, and no more with what they tell themselves is happening. No liberal has sustained an enquiry into individualism at greater length on paper than has dos Passos, but one cannot draw the regular conclusions. An apothogegm for one aspect of the work could be Marx's: "Men make their history, but they do not make it as they choose." But "U.S.A." is not a thesis; it is demonstration, not explanation; a thesis in action.

"The Big Money" is the last volume of the three. The determinism is most unremitting here; in the story of Mary French, a Communist, the agents of social change are themselves revealed as subject to it. Throughout, the narrative has been interspersed with trenchant biographies of public figures, "newsreels" of press cuttings, and a prose-poemy sequence entitled "The Camera Eye." As the book moves greyly to its close, the "Camera Eye" interludes become hortatory and impassioned; the condemnation of the American order is all at once explicit; the voice of dos Passos breaks through, with something of the poignant accents of Vanzetti:—

"they have clubbed us off the streets / they are stronger / they are rich they hire and fire the politicians the newspapereditors the old judges the small men with reputations the collegepresidents the wardheelers (listen businessmen collegepresidents judges / America will not forget her betrayers) they hire the men with guns— the uniforms the policecars the patrolwagons / allright you have won / you will kill the brave men our friends tonight

"there is nothing left to do / we are beaten / we the beaten crowd together in those old dingy schoolrooms on Salem Street / shuffle up and down the gritty creaking stairs sit hunched with bowed heads on benches and hear the old words of the haters of oppression / made new in sweat and agony tonight

"our work is over / the scribbled phrases / the nights typing releases the smell of the printshops the sharp reek of newprinted leaflets / the rush for Western Union stringing words into wires the search for stinging words to make you feel who are your oppressors America

"America our nation has been beaten by strangers who have turned the language inside out who have taken the clean words our fathers spoke and made them slimy and foul

"their hired men sit on the judge's bench they sit back with their feet on the tables under the dome of the State House they are ignorant of our beliefs they have the dollars the guns the armed forces the powerplants

"they have built the electricchair and hired the executioner to throw the switch

"all right we are two nations"

As one knows nothing about dos Passos' intimate history, the story of his demise is better told without speculation. He ceased to be a fellow-traveller in 1934, when a letter he published denouncing the Communist

party for its sabotage of a protest meeting held by the Socialist party, was counter-attacked in the pages of "New Masses." It was suggested that "comrade" dos Passos was "growing away from the revolution." This was followed by the publication of his finest book, with its implied censure of the Communists. It is difficult to think of any public figure who broke with Communism and moved to the spacious left of it and not the cramped and over-populated right. "Adventures of a Young Man" in 1939, the first volume of a new trilogy, revealed that dos Passos witnessed of the nefarious role of the Communists in the Spanish Civil War. It was followed by "Number One" and "The Grand Design," treating respectively of Huey Long-style fascism and the New Deal. Both books are worth reading: "The Grand Design" is merciless about the cocktail parties where top-level decisions are made; but they hang together less well: the author doesn't seem as interested, and he hasn't tried to supersede the technique of "U.S.A." When "The Prospect Before Us" was published in 1945, one might see what was wrong. The prospect before us is one of hard struggle along democratic lines, but likely amelioration. Now this is not true. Dos Passos' style is much the same as ever: big, windy vernacular and loads of plump cliches. The difference is that they serve no ironic intention now; they are meant to be serious. In 1953 dos Passos actually published "The Heart and Head of Thomas Jefferson." His latest novel one does not wish to read. Its hero looks back over his turbulent career. When a man looks back like that, it is clear what has become of him.

John dos Passos now lives in Provincetown, New Jersey. Here he paints a little, fishes a little, writes for the "New Republic," "Esquire" and other magazines which lots of people read. He is moved to address himself particularly to to-day's young men, whom he warns by the example of him and his friends when, in the days before collective bargaining and co-operative enterprises, they argued about capitalism, socialism, unemployment, phoney culture and the size of bank-accounts, and were blind to the realities under their noses.

America will not forget her betrayers.

IAN BEDFORD.

"We need not be surprised that strong sex impulses often lead to loathing for the sexual act and, in the Christian saints, to misogyny. Often enough in their invectives one detects a combination of a sentiment of pure asceticism with a sentiment of unsatisfied sexual interest. The sex-urge may become so violent as to provoke hallucinations, and the Christian becomes convinced that the Devil is tempting him to sins of impurity. And the Devil in question was not altogether without his reality. He is actually present in the mind of the human being, though he is more effectively banished by a sexual act than by any rite of exorcism."

VILFREDO PARETO.

THE MAN WHO WAS "GOOD STUFF"

James Burnham is best known as the author of "The Managerial Revolution." This book was written in the latter half of 1940, and published in 1941. It first appeared in England in May, 1942. In April, 1943, Burnham published his second, lesser known book, "The Machiavellians." These two works constitute his contribution to political theory.

I.

In "The Managerial Revolution" Burnham substantially accepts the Marxist picture of capitalist society as characterised by economic, social and political inequalities which are fundamentally based on the existence of different relations to the means of production. These relations define the social classes of capitalist society, and give rise to the leading antagonisms between the possessing and the non-possessing classes. Political power and social privilege are the prerogative of the bourgeoisie, by virtue of its ownership of capital; the political state is bourgeois in the sense that its activities tend, on the whole, to uphold bourgeois interests and privileges; the bourgeoisie is the ruling class because, apart from the above factors, its ideologies (i.e., its religious, cultural, moral and other beliefs) are sufficiently widely accepted to ensure a climate of opinion favourable to bourgeois rule.

According to Burnham, the only two views about the future of capitalism which have so far been put forward seriously are both false. It is false that capitalism is the natural state of society, and will continue forever or even for a very long period from now; and it is also false that socialism, in the sense of a free and classless society, will replace it now or in the foreseeable future. The present period, roughly since 1914, is seen by Burnham as the era of capitalist decline in which the rule of the bourgeoisie is in every department weakening or vanishing. The Marxist class-concepts presupposed in "The Managerial Revolution" imply that the social changes of the present era, as of any era, are primarily the outcome of economic changes. Therefore, Burnham's analysis is expressed chiefly in economic terms.

Social rule is the derivative, not, as in Marx's theory, of ownership, a legal concept, but of control, a functional concept. The rule of the bourgeoisie depended on the owners themselves being the controllers. This, however, has ceased to be the case, or, at any rate, is far less true of contemporary economic institutions than of those in the nineteenth century. Today control has passed into the hands of the managers to such an extent that, the absence of legal titles notwithstanding, the managers constitute a new social class. The managerial class, in fact, is a new ruling class, wrote Burnham in 1941; in some places already established as such (Russia, Nazi Germany), in other places still nascent or struggling for supremacy (e.g., New Deal).

The managers "are those who already for the most part in contemporary society are actually managing, on its technical side, the actual process of production, no matter what the legal or financial . . . form of the process." The new ruling class, as the old, is defined solely in terms of its relation to the means of production. The political interests of the new class are also explained in these terms: "It is an historical law," Burnham says, "that all social and economic groups of any size strive to improve their relative position with respect to power and privilege in society." The managers having achieved size through being in control of production, strive for political power. In this they are hindered by existing capitalist economic relations, and are aided considerably by the extension of state economic control over areas formerly controlled by private capitalists. The logical culminations of this trend, and models of managerial society, are Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany, although Burnham notes important differences between them.

It is no objection to Burnham's view that, historically, both Stalinism and Nazism arose not as articulate movements of underprivileged managers, but in a form which utilised and played upon the hopes and wishes of the proletarian masses. A social revolution always mobilises popular energies arising out of discontent, whether or not violence is used in the struggle for power. The outcome of either process is the disappointment and frustration of those hopes and the establishment of a new ruling class in place of the defeated one. In the course of their rise to dominance, managerial classes use slogans which appeal to wide masses of people who are not themselves part of the new ruling classes.

Just as there exist typical bourgeois ideologies, so the managers have to have ideologies, and while the latter are just as ramified and diverse as capitalist ideology, they, too, have important features in common. We can thus talk of Stalinism, Nazism, Fascism, the New Deal, technocracy, social engineering, welfarism, etc., as managerial ideologies. Managerial myths have an important role in pacifying the masses and enlisting them on the side of the managers in the conflict against the capitalist order. Burnham's theory may be summed up, briefly, as stating that alongside the decline of capitalism we find the rise of the managers, not only to economic control, but to political power corresponding to it. The whole process is already far advanced in some places, while in others it is still in a primitive stage. The tendency to a managerial society is, however, universal, and likely to prevail.

Considering the notoriety of the managerial thesis, it is surprising to find how little serious criticism the work has provoked. The main vocal attack on the book came from left wing quarters. Socialists attacked it for denying that socialism can be successful, anarchists attacked it for asserting that the managerial state will be successful. George Woodcock, in his review, criticises "The Managerial Revolution" as itself being a piece of managerial ideology—a charge repeated by George Orwell. As a consideration of the correctness of the views expressed by Burnham, this criticism is worthless. It attempts to dismiss Burnham's theory by impugning his motives. Orwell is particularly sophistical in his argument. The managerial theory, says Orwell, "for all its appearance of objectivity is the rationalisation of a wish . . . (Burnham) is assuming that the drift towards totalitarianism is irresistible, and must not be fought against, though it may be guided." However, it is not Burnham but Orwell who is assuming this. His refusal to take

the objective tone of "The Managerial Revolution" at its face value is especially gratuitous, as it is based on a distortion of Burnham's position. What Burnham actually says is that the drift away from capitalism is irreversible. This, of course, is an assertion open to falsification, but there are good grounds for believing that, should the managerial theory itself prove false, a return to the social conditions of pre-1914 will not take place. An allied point is that Orwell pretends that the managerial theory is entirely a prediction, to be tested only in the future, whereas it is largely a theory of contemporary developments and a description of already operating tendencies. Burnham is partly responsible for this mistaken impression being formed. He has, as Orwell notes, a too apocalyptic vision of society; he telescopes history and expects every existing historical trend to come to a head within the next few weeks. This error continually leads him into making theoretically irrelevant predictions about the immediate future. Looking back, we can see that these predictions have been, by and large, falsified; but this leaves the **broad** theory of managerial growth still to be considered on its own.

The lack of important criticism of "The Managerial Revolution" in wide intellectual circles does not mean that this work is sound in all of its main contentions. One point sometimes urged against Burnham is that he plays down the role of the "political managers" (bureaucrats) and overemphasises the part played by industrial managers. Burnham, for instance, wants to argue that the new ruling class will, in the long run, consist not of political bureaucrats—Stalin, Hitler, or Mussolini—but of the less spectacular, more anonymous industrial managers who alone have "privileged access to the instruments of production and preferential treatment in the distribution of the products of these instruments." Nominal rulers, as Burnham correctly claims, are often not the actual rulers. "Those officials who apparently are able to command the armed forces of the state nevertheless are not themselves the chief rulers. That they are not presupposes a whole set of established social beliefs and attitudes which condition and limit their action." In itself this does not show anything about whether the character of Soviet Russia or Nazi Germany is bureaucratic or managerial, were it not that Burnham, having established that apparent rulers are not always real rulers, proceeds as though they **never** were. For this, however, there is no evidence beyond the unsupported assumption, borrowed from Marx, that only the economic power holders can be the real rulers of society. The reference to established beliefs and attitudes is insufficient to mark off the real ruling class, since conditioning and limiting factors apply, in one form or another, to elites of all kinds. The question of who are the real power holders is an empirical issue to be decided by looking at the situation we are describing, not to be decided by the use of a priori criteria.

It is notable how, in arguing for the supremacy of the managers, Burnham temporarily abandons his functional definition of what constitutes "the managers," or generally, a social class; and argues from evidence which, conceptually at least, is incompatible with his main thesis. It does not matter, he maintains, whether we say that the bureaucrats rule the managers or vice versa. Modern political bureaucrats are in reality not unlike modern managers. "They direct masses of people in ways analogous to those used by managers in directing production; they have similar habits of thought, similar methods, similar manipulation of the possibilities of advanced technology." One can see what is meant, for these similarities between bureaucrats and managers are real enough. But Burnham is not logically entitled to refer to them in support of his view. Having defined a ruling class as a group of persons who have control over the access to the means of production, the only similarities or dissimilarities between groups that Burnham can point to in trying to decide which are the rulers, are similarities in function, i.e., **similarities or dissimilarities in the degree of control of various groups over access to the means of production.** In lapsing from this heroically austere position, Burnham is recognising certain obvious features of Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany. The point against him is that he cannot do this without landing himself in inconsistencies.

Burnham's argument on the supremacy of the managers exhibits many of the weaknesses of a non-pluralist theory—among them the breaking down of distinctions made in the beginning, and the progressive obscuring of the meaning of concepts which were initially introduced in an unambiguous manner. "Directing masses of people" is not the same as "controlling a factory," because ruling is not the same as engineering. The resemblances between the behaviour of bureaucrats and of managers are not to be thought of in terms of "control of the instruments of production," unless this phrase is to be deprived of any specific meaning. But Burnham goes even further than this: "In managerial society," he writes, "politics and economics are directly interfused . . . the economic arena is also the arena of the state." If we take this literally, it amounts to doing away with any distinction between "politics" and "economics," so that the distinction between political bureaucrats and industrial managers also disappears. In that case no sense could be made of the contention that the industrial managers are the real rulers.

But if we interpret Burnham more liberally as saying merely that in managerial society the state has appropriated a number of economic functions which it formerly did not possess, it can still be argued that the interfusion of politics and economics is not an interfusion of **function,** but only a coalition of personnel plus a shift in the seat of economic sovereignty. It is false, even on a generous interpretation of what Burnham is driving at, to think that in Soviet Russia or Nazi Germany the political role of technical administrators and of party functionaries is governed solely by their controlling interest in the instruments of production. Therefore, we cannot conclude, as Burnham wants to, that the technical managers must be politically superior in the long run. State control of the economy might involve the rule of economic managers and planners over party functionaries and politicians, or the reverse might be the case. To take a most recent instance which would falsify Burnham, there is evidence to show that the history of post-Stalin Russia involved the defeat of a semi-articulate movement of industrial managers (personified in Malenkov and represented by his policies), and the triumph of political bureaucracy and the rule of the party for whom Khrushchev acted as spokesman, especially in his decentralisation thesis.

One way, then, in which Burnham's over-estimation of mechanical economics comes out is in the description of the power structure of managerial society. It is not sufficient criticism to say that he "does not do justice to the variety of social conflicts," for this is not what Burnham is interested in doing; his theory is a broad, or general, account of the leading changes in modern society. What we have to say is that he represents even these broad and general features of managerial society as too mechanical, as unconnected with actual political

movements and institutions. In attempting to link the broad features of managerial society with definite social agencies, he does talk of "the inability of capitalism to solve economic problems" (e.g., unemployment), and of the "superfluousness of capitalists to the strictly technical aspect of production"—but these are notions to which it would be hard to ascribe much content. It is particularly obscure how, for example, specific pressure groups could make "economic problems" or "the technical aspect of production" part of their objectives. While spokesmen for political movements almost invariably refer to such notions, these references are principally ideological, and are not to be taken as describing the actual interests for which groups are struggling. Once we begin to study the precise manner in which groups are caught up in leading twentieth century social currents, the simple formula of control over access to the means of production becomes quite paltry. Attention will then have to be paid to some questions ignored by Burnham; for instance, the question of how oppositionist movements become **internally** bureaucratised and what part the exercise of power plays in that process.

Some issues relevant to this are discussed in "The Machiavellians." The bulk of this work consists of an exposition of the political theories of Machiavelli, Mosca, Michels, Sorel and Pareto. In the final chapters Burnham goes on to draw his own conclusions from these theories. The brief re-statement of the main thesis of "The Managerial Revolution" in terms of Machiavellian principles corrects some of the Marxist one-sidedness of the original account, while at the same time it is free from the unnecessary frenzy which, by leading to all sorts of hasty predictions about the immediate future, obscured the main contribution of "The Managerial Revolution." Burnham is thus led to consider the conditions under which liberty can flourish in managerial society. He finds that the chief danger to liberty is the influence of the "democratic totalitarians"; those persons who, under the slogans of extreme democracy, advocate Bonapartist policies and express Bonapartist attitudes.

Against the democratic totalitarians, Burnham poses a pluralistic conception of liberty: "Not unity, but difference, not the modern state but whatever is able to maintain itself against the state, not leaders but the unyielding opponents of leaders, not conformity with official opinion but persisting criticism, are the defences of freedom." In this excerpt Burnham offers a forceful criticism of the authoritarian spirit of these democrats. But the quotation is not typical, and it cannot be said that "The Machiavellians" presents a coherently worked out position along these lines. "Liberty or freedom means above all," writes Burnham in another passage, "the existence of a public opposition to the governing elite." "The existence of an opposition means a cleavage in the ruling class." "Liberty is preserved by those who are against the existing chief power. Oppositions which do not express genuine social forces are as trivial, in relation to entrenched power, as the old court jesters." "Only power restrains power."

Such conclusions weaken the earlier pluralistic stand. It is far from clear that the existence of opposition (which these last quotations define as either a cleavage in the ruling elite or a large scale untrivial movement) is the same as the thorough opposition to coercion indicated in the earlier excerpt. Burnham fails to make precise distinctions between oppositions of various kinds. He identifies two different questions: (1) What are the conditions for effectively restraining particular groups, or the state, in the exercise of power? And (2) What are the conditions under which particular movements maintain their oppositionist character? If, following Machiavellian principles, it is recognised that the exercise of countervailing power is itself inimical to maintaining an attitude of independence and of persistent opposition, the two questions above will be seen as being related differently to the issue of the survival of liberty. What restrains power is not necessarily the same as what upholds consistent opposition, especially if we think of the subject matter of these questions not as mere "social forces," but as groups of persons, as movements capable of internal corruption and loss of liberty. The conclusion that only power restrains power, even if true, does not establish that the exercise of power is itself among the conditions for the survival of liberty in society. This survival is associated with definite social movements (such as the initial phases of the Bolshevik movement in Russia, or of the Anarchist movement in Spain; or of the trade-union movement in the U.S.A. in the early part of the century), not simply with divisions within the ruling class.

A similar point is made by Rush Rhees: "Burnham would say, roughly, 'You may struggle for rights as much as you like; unless there is a separation and balance of social forces, such as wealth and military power and religion, your struggles will count for nothing at all.' But this seems almost to assume that those social forces do not have characters and policies. Burnham almost seems to think of them as physical forces without ideas. But the force of any opposition does depend partly on the consciousness with which it is exercised; or on the degree to which those who carry it on are alive to the issue at stake. Otherwise the 'social force' is likely to grow servile and present no real opposition . . . the degree of opposition in a society cannot be measured by the organisation of the society nor by the composition of its ruling class, if in that you consider only what functions or social forces enter into it."

What makes Burnham commit this error is that he is thinking in terms of underlying factors (the class control of the means of production in "The Managerial Revolution"; the division or unity, that is the organisation, of social forces in "The Machiavellians") as **ultimately** determining the conditions of social conflict and of liberty in society. It is in this sense that he can be said to be mechanical in his social theory; and it is in this sense, too, and not in the sense of failing to note their existence, that he can be said to ignore the variety of social conflicts.

II.

James Burnham was born in Chicago in 1905, the son of an English and an American parent. A graduate of Princeton University (1927) and of Oxford University (1929), he was professor of philosophy at the Washington Square College of New York University from 1929 to 1953. Sydney Hook is said to have got him his job.

Between 1930 and '35 Burnham edited the left-wing intellectual journal called "The Symposium." He joined the American Trotskyist movement in 1933, and became a member of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers' Party, formed after the expulsion of the Trotskyists from Eugene Debs' old Socialist Party in 1937. Together with Max Schachtman, he edited the Socialist Workers' Party's theoretical journal, "The New International." He was a leading figure of a movement which, despite the pretentious style and militant content of its literature, numbered its followers only in the hundreds, not tens of thousands. Even though he was high up in the party hierarchy, the Trotskyists never fully trusted him (at least, they said so after his defec-

tion). Burnham had refused to resign his academic position in favour of full-time party work, and he refused to accept dialectical materialism.

His position on the question of the permanent party job was vacillating. J. P. Cannon records having proposed in 1935 that Burnham "make an end of the two-for-a-nickel business of instructing college students who have no intention of connecting themselves with the labour movement, and devote his energies entirely to the party." Again in 1937 Burnham was offered the position of national secretary. He rejected this offer, as he had rejected the earlier one. In 1937 Cannon gave forth the opinion that "the real trouble with Burnham is not so much his mistaken political position as the more fundamental conflict between his bourgeois personal life and the increasingly exacting demands the party must make upon a leader." Burnham "suffers from the intellectual soul sickness. Who can cure that? You know very well," Cannon wrote to Trotsky in Mexican exile, "that the academic world of intellectuals is weighted down with the heavy pessimism in general and a new scepticism about everything." Cannon thought that Burnham was unsure of himself and going through a period of internal conflict—in this he resembled scores of intellectuals who around this time were going through a disillusioning process with its attendant soul-searching.

> "The Revolution, how betrayed?
> By whom misled, by what dismayed?
> What Stalin did and Trotsky said
> Beguiles my sabbath ease in bed.
>
> "And while the bell from yonder steeple
> Doles out opium to the people,
> 'Tis only just that Marx should be
> The opium of the bourgeoisie."

Burnham's position on the question of the dialectic was very much like that put forward by Max Eastman in "Marx, Lenin and the Science of Revolution" (1926). "I stopped arguing about religion long ago," said Burnham in his controversy with Trotsky. "I once heard Max Eastman voice this same sentiment," retorted Trotsky. Eastman, of course, was a traitor, and Burnham's rejection of dialectics was the echo of a traitor's view. His allegiance to Bolshevism for seven years, Burnham explained on the same grounds as Eastman had a decade earlier: Marxism is scientific and objective **despite** the dialectic, and not because of it. "There is no sense at all in which dialectics is fundamental to politics, none at all." And for seven years, with ups and downs no more pronounced than those of some avowed believers in the dialectic, Burnham managed, though against a background of never fully allayed suspicions about his motives, his sincerity, and his personal life, to collaborate successfully with a miniature Leninist party. The issue of his disbelief in the dialectic loomed large only in the internal dispute of the Socialist Workers' Party which lasted for some eight months, and led, in April, 1940, to the expulsion of Burnham, Schachtman and others.

The philosophical merits of this dispute, few as they were, need not concern us in detail. Trotsky, like any serious defender of dialectical materialism, was forced to talk nonsense; while Burnham, like most astute critics of Marxist metaphysics, talked a lot of sense. But on the crucial point which was not logical but political, Burnham was, on the whole, wrong. There is a very good sense in which dialectics is, if not fundamental, at least, very relevant to Marxist politics; not as a scientific method which Trotsky thought it was, but as psychological inducement; not as a verifiable theory of society, but as ideology. Just the same, among the ideological stocks-in-trade of Marxism, the philosophical theory of dialectical materialism does occupy the peculiar position of extra window-dressing which in time of need, seven years for Burnham, may be foregone without dire repercussions. In 1904 Lenin formed with Bogdanov the Machian positivist, a "tactical bloc neutral in philosophy," only to assert five years later, when he fell out with Bogdanov over political issues, that such alliances are impermissible for socialists and that philosophical unorthodoxy is the mother to all political heresy. The very alliance, however, shows that there is not that correspondence between a "correct" philosophy and "correct" politics which Lenin claimed against Bogdanov and Trotsky against Burnham. But, necessary or not, the **role** of dialectics in Marxist politics is one thing, its falsity another.

In the actual controversy Burnham's growing scepticism about various aspects of Marxism was brought to a head by disputes over the nature of the U.S.S.R., the nature of the Second World War, and the characteristics of Bolshevik organisation theories and methods. He adopted the view that the U.S.S.R. is in no sense a workers' state, but is an exploiting society ruled by a class of bureaucratic collectivists; that the unconditional defence of the U.S.S.R. in 1939 amounted to de facto support of Hitler in a war which was generally imperialistic; and, finally, that Bolshevik party methods are essentially undemocratic. As one would expect, Burnham was unsuccessful in defending these views in the hurly-burly of Leninist party politics. The flow of epithets and the current of mutual abuse is almost worth studying for its own sake. Trotsky called Burnham a "witchdoctor" whose magical instrument was his briefcase in which he skilfully hid his all-too-revealing resolutions. His supporters were labelled alternately the "League of Elevated Souls" and the "League of Factional Abandon." These were allusions to the invective "League of Abandoned Hope," which only a few months earlier Burnham himself had hurled at Max Eastman, Eugene Lyons and others, whose ranks he was now openly accused of wanting to join. Naturally, when in May, 1940, not one month after his expulsion from the Socialist Workers' Party and the formation of the minority Workers' Party, James Burnham announced his total rejection of Marxism and his resignation from the Workers' Party, Trotsky and Cannon triumphantly shouted "I told you so!"

They rightly picked Burnham as not being one of their staunchest supporters, but by a logic peculiar to politics, especially Marxist politics, they took his betrayal to refute his views. Burnham, anticipating this favourite device of political sophistry, countered it in his letter of resignation from the Workers' Party: "My beliefs are facts; and the defeats and betrayals, and the mode of my life and my tastes, are also facts. There they are, whatever the truth about sources and origins and motives . . ." At the same time, Burnham acknowledged what his previous manner of rejecting dialectics had failed to consider: "I have been wrong, and Trotsky —with so many others—right on this score; that dialectical materialism though scientifically meaningless is psychologically and historically an integral part of Marxism." And so James Burnham left active revolutionary politics. "Believing as I do," he wrote in his letter of resignation, "I cannot wish success to the Workers' Party; but I can and do wish its members well. To the extent that each of us, in his own way and arena, preserves the values of truth and freedom, I hope that we

shall continue to regard ourselves as comrades, whatever names we use and whatever labels might be tied around our necks."

During 1940 he wrote "The Managerial Revolution." Some of the major elements of this work are unoriginal. Not only has Burnham drawn on the general climate of opinion among dissident radicals of his day, on the views of certain academic economists, political theorists and their journalistic popularisers, but he has also made specific, though unacknowledged, use of the work of Bruno R., a French ex-communist, who in 1939 published a book entitled "La Bureaucratization du Monde." While plagiarism is irrelevant to the correctness of the managerial theory, it throws light on the question of what were Burnham's convictions in this transition period. If it is true that parts of "The Managerial Revolution" are derivative, this bears out Burnham's own claim that he had not, in 1940, rejected Marxism sociology. Bruno R.'s thesis was that a new political ruling class of bureaucrats is taking control of Russia and of the world. Marx had taught that politicians cannot exist in the long run in isolation from the economic structure. Hence, "The Managerial Revolution" may be regarded as the theory of bureaucratic revolution which Burnham had borrowed from Bruno R., plus Marxist sociology, which he had retained from his lately renounced revolutionary views.

After 1943 Burnham's activities as author become intensified. He published the following books: 1947—"The Struggle for the World"; 1950—"The Coming Defeat of Communism"; 1953—"Containment or Liberation?"; 1954—"The Web of Subversion." The list of titles is almost self-explanatory. These writings no longer make any serious contribution to social theory, they do not deal with politics in a critical manner. Their level seldom rises above the juggling of cliches borrowed straight from the State Department's outlook on politics.

In 1955, James Burnham, having given up the two-for-a-nickel job of instructing college students, became editor of the National Review, a magazine which was foremost among the supporters of the political views and practices of the late Senator McCarthy. He had traversed a lot of territory in a decade and a half. From being an active revolutionary with theoretical reservations, he passed, at first, to being politically unattached while working out a theoretically more satisfying, but with regard to revolutionary betterment of society, more pessimistic position. The fruits of this period, the two books discussed above, show Burnham at his best; from then on he deteriorates. He was a crafty journalist at all times and, like most of this ilk, intoxicated with his own words. This must have been in evidence even at a time when revolutionary convictions kept his more ambitious traits in check. Sharp-eyed Trotsky discerned something of the kind: "Burnham was considered 'good stuff' at one time? Yes, the proletarian party in our epoch must make use of every intellectual who can contribute to the party . . . (Burnham) can write, has some formal skill in thinking, not deep, but adroit. He can accept your idea, develop it, write a fine article about it —and then forget it. The author can forget—but the worker cannot. However, so long as we can use such people, well and good. Mussolini at one time was also 'good stuff.'"

In 1940, Burnham, Schachtman and the other dissident Trotskyists formed their own party, then called the Workers' Party. Later it became known as the Independent Socialist League. Burnham, as we know, resigned from it a month after it was formed. The League was a tiny, inconsequential organisation defending a less authoritarian interpretation of communism than is usual. Despite its insignificance, it became a victim of the subversion hysteria which swept America a few years ago. The League was placed on the Attorney-General's list of subversive organisations. About a year ago the Independent Socialist League appealed to the Attorney-General to have its name removed from that list. At the hearing of this appeal the chief witness for the state was—Dr. James Burnham. The appeal was dismissed, and in 1958 the former Workers' Party expired

". . . to the extent that each of us, in his own way and arena, preserves the values of truth and freedom. I hope that we shall continue to regard ourselves as comrades, whatever names we use and whatever labels may be tied around our necks . . ."

GEORGE MOLNAR.

Bakunin: "But the Marxists say, this minority will consist of workers. Yes, indeed, of ex-workers, who, once they become rulers or representatives of the people, cease to be workers and begin to look down upon the toiling masses."

Khrushchev: ". . . as you know, I used to be a worker myself." (17th Sept., 1959).

ORGASM THEORY*

1. INTRODUCTION.

In discussing the work of Wilhelm Reich, it is important to note at which stage of his career it was developed. His orgasm theory** was formulated and consolidated between 1922 and 1926, while he was still a member of the psychoanalytic movement (which he left in 1934), and before his book, **"Character Analysis,"** was published (1933).

His differences with orthodox psychoanalysis arose, in the first place, because of his investigation into how libido came to be blocked from orgastic discharge; that is, into "the question: **whence does the social suppression of sexuality originate, and what is its function?"**

Only in about 1933 did Reich's clinical work lead him into experimentation with libido-economics and to the notion of "orgone energy" (discovered in 1939), which eventually led to his conflict with the United States authorities over the question of quackery and his imprisonment for contempt of court.

In this paper I want to examine the development of the orgasm theory from the theory of the neuroses and from the notion of "orgastic potency," treating it, as Reich himself did, as a development within the general framework of psychoanalytic theory.

2. THE ACTUAL NEUROSES.

According to Reich, Freud held that the actual neuroses (which Reich calls stasis neuroses) were caused by chemical substances "which, if not correctly 'metabolized,' caused such symptoms as palpitation, cardiac irregularity, acute anxiety attacks, sweating and other vegetative symptoms."

Now, the actual neuroses, on Freud's theory, are anxiety neurosis and neurasthenia. Anxiety neurosis is a result of abstinence or coitus interruptus, and neurasthenia results from excessive masturbation. Both forms of actual neurosis may be cured without psychoanalysis if the patient takes up coitus and does not practice withdrawal before ejaculation (or before "satisfaction" in the case of the woman).

Freud also held the view that increase of libido is dependent on increase in hormonal secretions which may be stimulated both physically and mentally. In so far as Freud held that undischarged libido was transformed into anxiety, we may agree that he believed that hormonal secretions cause the symptoms of actual neurosis.

On the other hand, Freud believed that the psychoneuroses (e.g., hysteria and obsessional neurosis) could be cured only by psychoanalysis because of their "psychic content" which included the process of repression. As Reich says: "At the bottom of every psychoneurosis was the incest phantasy and the fear of injury to the genital. They were, indeed, **infantile** and **unconscious** sexual ideas which expressed themselves in the psychoneurotic symptom."

While Freud maintained that actual neuroses could be cured by eliminating the harmful sexual practice, he also held that an actual neurosis often occurred in conjunction with a psychoneurosis, and he even hazarded the suggestion that all psychoneuroses might have "an actual-neurotic core," this suggestion being in line with his dictum that "with a normal sexual life no neurosis is possible" ("normal" here referring to the usual form of heterosexual genital copulation).

Reich's preoccupation has been with libido-economics, i.e., with the quantitative features of libidinal energy, and he is more concerned with what he calls the problem of "the **source of energy** in the psychoneuroses." On Reich's view, an actual (or "stasis") neurosis is "a case of misdirected biological energy," but just as the anxiety attacks, palpitations, etc., of the actual neurosis "are, as it were, malignant growths which are nourished by the undischarged sexual energy," so the symptoms of the psychoneuroses, e.g., the conversions of hysteria and the compulsions of obsessional neurosis, also appear as malignant growths, and they, too, must derive their energy "from the 'actual-neurotic core' of dammed-up sexual energy."

In his later writings*, Freud suggested the connection between actual neurosis and psychoneurosis in the following terms: In the actual neuroses, the accumulation of undischarged libido (which is **caused** by hormonal secretions, but is not, therefore, the same as them) leads to an economic crisis in which there is more libidinal energy than can be coped with, and the organism responds **automatically** to this danger-situation by the reaction of anxiety. In the psychoneuroses, on the other hand, symptoms are formed which avoid the danger-situation (perhaps by "binding" the undischarged libido in some way). This is shown by the fact that if the symptoms (e.g., the ceremonial of an obsessive) are prevented from occurring, the danger-situation materialises (Freud assumes) and the anxiety reaction occurs; that is, if the symptom is prevented, the patient reacts with anxiety. Freud suggests that symptom-formation removes the danger-situation by altering in some way the id-processes which put the organism in danger of loss of love or of castration, though it may also serve to keep the id-processes under control and prevent the automatic activation of anxiety by an overwhelming excess of instinctual excitation.

Reich formulates the connection in terms of his Marxist background—while pure actual neuroses are rare, he argues, they are the bases on which a psychic superstructure is elaborated in hysteria and obsessional neurosis.

3. ORGASTIC POTENCY.

However, Reich is not so concerned with qualitative distinctions as with questions of quantity, and he sug-

Based on a paper delivered to the Libertarian Society on 29th June, 1959.

** See Chapter 4 of Reich, W.: "The Function of the Orgasm" (The Discovery of the Orgone, Vol. I.), trans. by T. P. Wolfe, Orgone Institute Press, N.Y., 1942.

* e.g., "Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety," International Psychoanalytic Library No. 28.

gests that the intensity or strength of a mental process **"depends upon the quantity of the somatic excitation** with which it is connected"; following McDougall he points out that emotions "originate from the instincts," though he adds, "consequently from the somatic sphere." He maintains that a mental process "endowed with a very small amount of energy" is "capable of provoking an **increase** of excitation" which, in turn, can make the mental process "vivid and forceful," though if the excitation subsides, the mental process also collapses. In the stasis (actual) neuroses, the mental processes connected with copulation are not conscious, because of the operation of mental inhibitions, and the excitation or energy of these processes becomes connected with other mental processes which are less subject to censorship.

Reich concludes: "The stasis neurosis is a **somatic** disturbance, caused by sexual energy which is misdirected because it is frustrated. However, **without a psychic inhibition, sexual energy can never become misdirected.** Once an inhibition has created the sexual stasis, this in turn may easily increase the inhibition and reactivate infantile ideas which then take the place of normal ones. This is the nature of Freud's 'regression to infantile mechanisms.' The first cause of the neurosis was the moral **inhibition,** its driving force the **unsatisfied sexual energy."**

In support of this view, Reich quotes Charcot and Chrobak. Speaking of neuroses, Charcot said: "Mais, dans ces cas pareils, c'est toujours la chose genitale, toujours! toujours! toujours! . . ." while Chrobak's prescription for a case of hysteria was, "Rx. Penis normalis, dosim, Repetatur." Reich contends "that every individual who has managed to preserve a bit of naturalness knows that there is only one thing wrong with neurotic patients: the **lack of full and repeated sexual satisfaction."**

He goes on to claim that the following two points have been confirmed in clinical practice: (i) **"The severity of any kind of psychic disturbance is in direct relation to the severity of the disturbance of genitality,"** and (ii) **"The prognosis depends directly on the possibility of establishing the capacity for full genital satisfaction."**

The possibility of full genital satisfaction depends upon orgastic potency, **"the capacity for complete discharge of all dammed-up sexual excitations** through **involuntary pleasurable contractions of the body."** But even here, Reich is not content with qualitative distinctions; there are quantitative degrees of sexual satisfaction within orgastically potent coitus—**"The intensity of pleasure in the orgasm** (in the sexual act which is free of anxiety and unpleasure, and unaccompanied by phantasies) **depends on the amount of sexual tension concentrated in the genital;** the pleasure is all the more intense the greater in amount and the steeper the 'drop' in the excitation."

The notion of degrees of satisfaction in orgastically potent copulation also comes out in the contention that "the orgasm is more intense if the peaks of genital excitation coincide," and that "the harder the imagination has to work in order to bring about an equivalence of the partner with the ideal, the more does the sexual experience lose in intensity and sex-economic value."

That is to say, while the orgastically impotent individual will always be grossly neurotic, the orgastically potent organism may exhibit various neurotic features.

From his clinical practice, Reich concluded: **"The disturbance of genitality is not,** as was previously assumed, **one** symptom among others, **but it is the symptom of the neurosis** . . . the neurosis is not merely the result of a **sexual** disturbance in the broader sense of Freud; it is rather the result of a **genital** disturbance in the strict sense of **orgastic impotence."** In other words, while accepting the general Freudian notion of sexuality, Reich wants to "amplify the concept of genital function by that of orgastic potency, and by defining it in terms of energy."

4. SEXUAL STASIS.

In developing his theory that neurosis is caused by sexual stasis (undischarged libido), Reich makes the following points:—

(a) If every neurosis has a core of dammed-up sexual energy, then this damming-up "can only be caused by a disturbance of orgastic satisfaction."

(b) **"The energy source of the neurosis lies in the differential between accumulation and discharge of sexual energy.** The neurotic psychic apparatus is distinguished from the healthy one by the constant presence of undischarged sexual energy. This is true not only of the stasis neuroses (actual neuroses of Freud), but for all psychic disturbances, with or without symptom formation."

(c) While the first pre-requisite of cure is "to make the repressed sexuality conscious," this alone need not necessarily effect the cure. "It does so only if at the same time the **source of energy, the sexual stasis,** is eliminated; in other words, **only if the awareness of instinctual demands goes hand in hand with the capacity for full orgastic gratification.** In that case, the pathological psychic growths are deprived of their energy at the source."

(d) "The supreme goal of a causal analytic therapy, therefore, is the establishment of orgastic potency, of the ability to discharge an amount of sexual energy equal to that accumulated."

(e) **"The pathogenicity of the Oedipus complex** . . . depends on **whether or not there is a physiologically adequate discharge of sexual energy."** The central neurotic conflict arises from the sexual child-parent relationship which provides "the **historical** experiential **material** that furnishes the **content** of the neurosis," but this historical conflict "could not produce an enduring disturbance of the psychic equilibrium if it were not continually nourished by the actual stasis which this conflict originally produced." That is to say, it is because the Oedipus complex gives rise to inhibitions which prevent full genital satisfaction, that sexual stasis (the damming-up of libido) occurs, and it is the undischarged libido that provides the energy or strength of the incestuous attachments. "The historical pathological incestuous attachment to parents and siblings loses its strength when the energy stasis in the immediate situation is eliminated; in other words, when full orgastic gratification takes place in the immediate present."

(f) **"Pregenital** (oral, anal, muscular, etc.) sexuality **differs** in its dynamics basically from **genital** sexuality. **If non-genital sexual behaviour is continued, the genital function becomes disturbed.**

The resulting sexual stasis, in turn, activates pregenital phantasies and behaviour. These, as found in the neuroses and perversions, are not only the cause of genital disturbance, but at least as much its result."

That is to say, pregenital activities do not discharge sufficient libido (especially after puberty, when the level of hormonal secretion has increased sharply) to prevent a sexual stasis developing, and this undischarged libido may then add force and energy to the neurotic activities.

(g) Reich claims to have added a "quantitative" factor, i.e., the **strength** and **force,** the **energy cathexis** of psychic experiences and activities" to psychoanalytic theory.

5. FORMULATION OF THE ORGASM THEORY.

Although never explicitly stated in this form, it appears that Reich's theory of libido could be formulated as follows:—

(a) Libido is caused by the secretion of gonadal hormones (i.e., androgens and oestrogens) and a certain level of hormonal secretion is necessary for stimulation to be experienced as sexually exciting, e.g., immediately after orgasm a stimulus which would otherwise be experienced as pleasurable is felt merely as a rubbing.

(b) The absolute amount of hormonal secretion required for this sensitizing differs in different constitutions, though usually a small amount is sufficient. Once the threshold is reached, there is interaction between hormonal secretion and physical and mental stimulation in building up libido.

(c) Once libido reaches a certain level, given the necessary external conditions, the orgasm reflex is activated ("the unitary involuntary contraction and expansion of the total organism"). It is assumed that the orgasm reflex is biologically the easiest mechanism for libido to activate, i.e., that a smaller amount of libido is required to activate the orgasm reflex than to activate other mechanisms of discharge.

In accordance with the general theory of natural selection, it is assumed that organisms in which libido was discharged by other mechanisms before the threshold for activation of the orgasm reflex was reached, would copulate infrequently and thus have little chance of reproducing their kind. Presumably such species would eventually die out, leaving only those species in which the organic constitution was such that the first mechanism activated by libido was the orgasm reflex (or at least some **genital** process which, in connection with other suitable conditions, leads automatically to the orgasm reflex).

(d) If the orgasm reflex is the biologically "spontaneous" mechanism for the discharge of libido, the question arises as to how libido can come to be "blocked" from this mode of discharge and diverted into other channels. Reich does not hesitate here, but asserts that such blocking is caused by mental processes promoted by social conditions making for servility and quietism; **"without a psychic inhibition, sexual energy can never become misdirected."**

In other words, the blocking of libido from orgastic discharge is due to social factors which give rise to mental processes of inhibition. On Reich's view, one of the important inhibitory processes **is pleasure-anxiety** which is "the foundation of the **fear** of a free, independent way of living."

Reich connects this fear of pleasurable excitation with such socially conditioned mental processes as castration anxiety and the severity of the super-ego; what inhibits sexuality is the fear of punishment, i.e., the fear of the social consequences of sexuality. He emphasises in this connection the social role of religion in implanting sexual anxiety and sexual guilt feelings, and the error of Marxism in assuming that if the economic basis of social institutions is changed, human relationships will change of themselves.*

(e) When libido is blocked from orgastic discharge, it builds up until there is sufficient to activate other mechanisms of discharge with a higher threshold. But these mechanisms only discharge libido down to their threshold, leaving an accumulation of undischarged libido that Reich calls the sexual stasis.

It is because the alternative methods of discharge are less efficient than the orgasm reflex that sexual stasis, the damming-up of libido in the organism, occurs. And it is this dammed-up sexual energy that is the source of energy for the neuroses.

(f) The instilling of inhibitions begins early in life: "This formation of character in the authoritarian mould has as its central point not parental love, but **the authoritarian family.** Its chief instrument is the suppression of sexuality in the infant and the adolescent." The early family situation of the Oedipus complex is important as a microcosm of the general social situation; the parents are the agents of society in the early training of the infant for his social role

By "authoritarian," Reich means compulsive as opposed to spontaneous, and the authoritarian is characterised by "sexual repression, biological rigidity, moralism and puritanism."

Authoritarianism "is found in the church as well as in academic organisations, among the Communist as well as in parliamentary governments," but those whose genital motility has not been blocked "consider any illusion a danger," are scientific and strive for "work democracy" though democracy "is not something static, not a **state** of 'freedom' which could be given, granted or guaranteed to a group of people by government agencies elected by them or forced upon them"; rather, is it "a difficult slow-working **process"** by which social groups "have—by no means 'get'—every possibility for training themselves in the administration of a life, individual and social, that is alive, and of advancing to ever better forms of living."

In this insistence that the spontaneously orgastic life is a struggle rather than a static state, Reich comes close to the notion that "freedom" involves what libertarians, after Max Nomad, have called "permanent protest," i.e., that being free and independent involves a permanent struggle with the authoritarian forces of compulsive morality.

6. SUMMARY.

Reich's orgasm theory may be summarised as follows:

The human organism is so constructed that the physiologically easiest way to discharge libido is through the genital apparatus. Furthermore, the orgasm reflex in fully satisfying coitus drains off all or nearly all of the libido present at that time—at least, the level of libido is reduced below the point where physical and mental stimulation are effective.

* See Reich, W.: **"The Sexual Revolution,"** Peter Nevill & Vision Press, London, 1951.

However, libido can be blocked from discharge through the genital apparatus by inhibitory mental processes. If this happens, libido builds up until it reaches the levels necessary for the activation of other discharge mechanisms. But the thresholds for these mechanisms are higher than that for the orgasm reflex, and they do not discharge libido much below their thresholds. Thus non-genital modes of discharge leave higher levels of libido in the organism, and a chronically high level of libido causes certain changes in the organism which we know as symptom formation, anxiety attacks and other neurotic activities (possibly including autism as an essential feature)

In order to cure the organism of these neurotic activities, it is necessary to remove the accumulation of libido, and this can only be done by removing the blockage that prevents libidinal discharge through the orgasm reflex.

The blockage is caused by mental processes which derive from social life. In particular, the Oepidus complex (which is involved in all neuroses) is sustained by an accumulation of libido resulting from inhibitions developed by early training in the family situation.

D. J. I.

"In fact, it is especially in regard to sexuality that the conception of sin finds application and that 'guilt' is felt; and it may be that without exercising some command over the sexual life of the lower orders authorities could never keep them docile."

JOHN ANDERSON.

REICH'S CRITICISM OF FREUD

When he was a member of the official Freudian school as much as afterwards, Reich emphasised the importance of genital sexuality for the understanding of neuroses. Unlike other Freudians, he wanted to stress and not ignore the direct reference to genitality, i.e., to sex in the ordinary "narrow" sense, which Freud had made in his earlier work (compare Freud's account of actual neuroses, his suggestion that lack of satisfactory sexual intercourse is a basis for all neuroses, his criticism of sublimation, and such articles as "'Civilised' Sexual Morality," "On 'Wild' Psycho-Analysis"). This, Reich elaborated into his account of orgastic potency and impotence (not the same as mere technical potency and impotence), which he took to be essential to the understanding of neuroses and of therapy. Since every neurosis "has a core of dammed-up sexual energy . . . it can be caused only by a disturbance of orgastic satisfaction." Accordingly, the aim of successful therapy is "the establishment of orgastic potency, of the ability to discharge an amount of sexual energy equal to that accumulated." (D. J. Ivison deals with this in his article.)

In thus expanding Freud's theory of genitality, and in making detailed clinical studies of variations in orgastic satisfaction, etc. (in which he differed from his fellow analysts who made little attempt to investigate this subject), Reich clashed and ultimately broke with the orthodox Freudians. In explaining his disagreement with the Freudians and with Freud himself (for Freud not only did not develop his earlier views, but came to oppose them), Reich makes a number of criticisms, particularly social criticisms of the Freudian movement and its ideas. He points out that there were three main reasons for Freud's change of line (and a **fortiori** for agreement by his followers). (1) The way in which Freud's early enthusism about the liberalising social contributions to be made by psycho-analysis was checked by the hostile reception of his views, and was replaced by an interest in having psycho-analysis at least to some degree accepted by the world of learning. (2) Freud's desire to preserve the psycho-analytic movement and avoid further splits, when, by the 1920s, the movement caught on and attracted many socially conservative physicians. "They," Reich points out, "had only one interest, to make psycho-analysis socially acceptable as quickly as possible. They carried the conservative traditions of this world into the organisation, and without an organisation Freud's work could not exist." (3) Certain doctrinal changes (perhaps as a response to (2)), notably ones concerning sublimation, the theory of the death-instinct, and the elaboration of the super-ego theory, which fitted in with the increasing social conformity of the Freudians.

Reich refers to the increasing emphasis in psycho-analytic thought on the notion of sublimation, i.e., the process of deflecting or sublimating impulses in a new direction, with a parallel transfer of energy, on which, it was argued, the stability and culture of our society largely depends. At the same time, Freudians argued that in cases where sublimation fails there can be a process of rejection or renunciation, as distinct from repression, of "anti-social" impulses. (For instance, there is Anna Freud's view that whereas the child with a weak, undeveloped ego has to repress, the adult with a strong, adult ego can reject or renunciate instinctual impulses.) Against this, Reich argues that neither the process of sublimation nor that of rejection is successful, since they are taken to include denial of genital sexuality. But this cannot be got rid of; the sexual frustration, especially of adolescents, leads to the orgastic disturbances of so many people when, in their adult life, they do come to have regular sexual intercourse. At the same time, Reich draws attention to the concealed social policy behind this theory. In early Freudian thought the impulses to be sublimated were notably incestuous and sadistic impulses, and it was only later that they came, significantly, to include genital impulses as well, i.e., these were now "anti-social," too. As an illustration of this later line, Reich cites the following view of Freud's:—

> "It is a bad misunderstanding, explained only by ignorance, if people say that psycho-analysis expects the cure of neurotic illness from the free 'living out' of sexuality. On the contrary, the making conscious of the repressed sexual desires make possible their control, a control which could not have been achieved by the repression. It would be more correct to say that the analysis liberates the neurotic from the shackles of his sexuality."

Reich comments as follows:

"If, for example, the 17-year-old daughter of a National Socialist dignitary suffers from hysterical attacks as a result of a repressed desire for sexual intercourse, this desire, in the psychoanalytic treatment, will be recognised, to begin with, as an incestuous desire, and will be rejected as such. So far so good. But what happens to the sexual need? According to the above-quoted formulation, the girl is 'liberated' from the shackles of her sexuality. Clinically, however, it looks like this: When the girl, with the aid of the analysis, frees herself from her father, she liberates herself only from the toils of her incest wish, but not from her sexuality as such. Freud's formulation neglects this basic fact." ("The Sexual Revolution," pp. 14-15.)

Reich also denies the existence of the death instinct, and criticises the way in which the concept of the Oedipus Complex is used in Freudian theory. The death instinct has been less accepted than other Freudian concepts—like the contrasted life-instinct, it functions as a principle of explanation imposed from above, remote from and hard to verify by the facts it is supposed to explain. Moreover, as Reich stresses, the introduction of the death-instinct leads to a further dilution of the original libido theory. Whereas the earlier Freudian treatment of aggression and destructiveness allowed them to be greatly influenced by the frustration of sexual impulses, the new theory places them in a self-contained biological compartment, immune from sexual and social conditions. In the case of the Oedipus Complex, while Reich emphasises the importance of child-parent conflicts and identifications, he also wants to qualify Freud's account. Along with other critics, he insists that the

particular Oedipus forms of conflict, etc., described by Freud, are not ultimate, inescapable forms, but are subject to social conditions—so that we could expect important variations depending on the type of society or subsociety involved.

Reich's criticism also applies to the super-ego theory. That theory is connected with the theory of the death-instinct—the death-instinct is taken to contribute the more unconscious and more aggressive features of the super-ego, so that if the death-instinct is fixed and inevitable, the super-ego is so far also fixed and inevitable. But, apart from the criticisms of the death-instinct, this extension of the super-ego theory has obscured the other part of the super-ego—what was earlier called the "ego-ideal"—which is closely connected with infantile frustrations arising from parental authority and with the development of moral prohibitions. It is here easy enough to show that the super-ego is subject to important social variations. The Freudians themselves allow variations which arise from the different kinds of identification people have in childhood and later. Some of them also allow for what is called "the weakening of the super-ego," and, again, for a "criminal super-ego," i.e., for a super-ego with values and prohibitions quite different from the "normal" super-ego. This points the way to a theory of the social relativity of the super-ego: we may, if we wish, speak of a single super-ego apparatus, but what it maintains are the **different** values and prohibitions that different groups of people may have.

In general, as Reich shows, the trouble with the Freudians has been their lack of social theory. From Freud's own explicit pronouncements on social questions (e.g., in "Civilisation and Some of Its Discontents"), it is clear, as Reich says, that Freud was unaware of social structures; he had a too simple, individualistic view of society. From this resulted his tendency to psychologise social factors, or to mistake particular social factors for absolute factors. But, in addition to this, Freud in his later work came to have a concealed social policy of his own. As Reich points out, finding that there was a conflict between instinctual demands, including genital demands, and the frustrating world, Freud in his later work wanted to influence the instinctual demands in the form of having them rejected (whereas the open social policy Reich advances is that of seeking to change the world, i.e., the social pressures which frustrate genital demands). The same thing comes out in Freudian references to the "reality principle." In the early theory the move from the pleasure principle to the reality principle can be understood as adjustment to reality in the sense of discovering what is the case, recognising that the ego is not omnipotent. But in the later theory "reality" comes increasingly to mean, not physical and social reality in general, but specifically the **prevailing social reality,** i.e., the prevailing social demands made on people, including the demand that sexuality be frustrated. As is obvious with the American neo-Freudians, but is also true of the later official Freudians, in talking about the reality principle which people must be adjusted to, they appear to be on the side of unalterable scientific truth, but this is a mask for a **particular,** conformist, social reality principle, determined by a certain conception of what is good for society. (In this connection it is worth reading Ernest Jones' article on "The Normal Mind" for its candid criticism of the social prejudices of psycho-analysts, and also the series of symposia on "Training Analyses" in the "Internat. Journ. of Psycho-Analysis," 1954, for the picture that emerges of what is a desirable type of analyst.)

Given this trend, it is no wonder nothing like Reich's account of genital sexuality or of the influence of social forces is now found in psycho-analysis. Such an account requires social insight and a willingness to struggle against prevailing pressures, but there is every reason to believe that the social outlook of most present-day psycho-analysts is little different from that of most other members of the medical profession.

JIM BAKER.

FUTILITARIANISM — A LIBERTARIAN DILEMMA?

Sydney Libertarians have been attacked on two grounds:—

(i) Since they recognise that authoritarian activities are not going to disappear, why do libertarians continue struggling and protesting against them?

(ii) Libertarians claim to oppose policemen, priests, moralists and authoritarians of all sorts, but what are they going to do about it? (Where are their bombs?)

Both these criticisms have been advanced against libertarianism recently, and libertarians have found some difficulty in giving a short answer to either question—in fact, some libertarians would reject any attempt at a short answer on the grounds that it would misrepresent a complex position. Nevertheless, I shall outline the form which a short answer might take.

In order to understand how these questions come to be posed, it is necessary to have some knowledge of the social theory of Sydney libertarians. In brief, this social theory is based on a pluralist view of society, on the recognition that any society is composed of a number of different ways of going on. These different social activities are never completely reconcilable; there is no lowest common denominator among the ways of going on which would give rise to some consensus of which the state (or any other institution) could be the guardian. Different social groups just do pursue different activities, and these activities often conflict. What does occur are compromises and limited agreements, concessions in return for the implementation of some parts of a policy, and these compromises, concessions and adjustments are sometimes made through the machinery of the state. However, the state is never an impartial arbiter, but a biased referee, a system of social activities which have interests of their own.

Libertarians believe that pluralism is an account of what is the case and that it is utopian to believe that there will ever be an end to the conflict of social interests. The history of society is one of social conflicts; it is unhistorical to believe that history will cease and a millennium dawn—whether the millennium be the Kingdom of God, the classless society, the national interest or any other form of the common good.

Now one form of social conflict is that between authoritarian and libertarian activities, and it is just as utopian, just as unhistorical to believe that this form of conflict will ever disappear as it is to believe that all social conflict will ever cease.

In particular, Sydney libertarians hold that conflict with authoritarianism cannot be overcome by libertarians capturing social power—through the machinery of the state, the general strike, or any social revolution—because the mere fact of being in a position of power leads to interests which are authoritarian rather than libertarian.

I have done no more than outline the general position involved and have ignored the amplifications and qualifications that a full treatment would require, but this brief account of social pluralism may suffice to indicate how the two questions come to be raised—why do libertarians continue to protest if they recognise that they will never eliminate authority, and, if libertarians are opposed to authority, why don't they take some effective action against it?

It has generally been found easier to attempt to answer the second question, usually along the lines of "set a thief to catch a thief." If libertarians were to organise either to effect reforms within the existing social order or to overthrow it and to create a new order, they would have to become authoritarian. They only remain libertarian while they eschew moralism, while they refrain from telling people that what is good for libertarians is good for the whole world, while they remain pluralists and recognise that other social groups have interests different from those of libertarianism. The libertarian way of going on is by means of hypothetical imperatives: if you are interested in anarchism, atheism and free love, then come and listen to us; if you are interested in security, certainty and authority, then libertarianism is not your cup of tea.

The answer to the first question, I think, lies in the same direction. Just as libertarianism involves anarchism, atheism and free love, so libertarianism involves conflict with authoritarianism, just because it is libertarianism and not something else. It is a social fact that the interests of libertarians and authoritarians do conflict, and this is "why" the opposition between the two exists.

This kind of answer may appear to be dangerously close to circularity—why are libertarians libertarian? Because they are libertarian. But the apparent circularity arises only when the complexity and diversity of libertarianism are ignored. Both questions ask the same thing: why do libertarians both oppose authority and accept the fact of its continued existence? The answer can only be found in other features of libertarianism, by showing the connections between these other features and the opposition to, along with the acceptance of the continued existence of authority.

I have tried to show how the acceptance of the continued existence of authoritarianism derives from the pluralism of libertarianism, as well as from its non-moralistic way of going on. The opposition to authoritarianism, besides deriving from the "anarchism, atheism and free love" of libertarians, is connected with their social pluralism, for to expound consistently a pluralist theory of society is to reject the monist and solidarist views of the authoritarians (how can you accept their claim that what is good for the nation is good for you if the truth is that there is no national good, no interest common to all the many social activities which exist in that geographic region?) and in rejecting these views as illusions, one may come to inquire into the

motives of the authoritarians.*

* Such an inquiry may, of course, lead one to side with the authoritarians in an attempt to win power or profit (e.g., Pareto). It is the combination of social pluralism with other views, such as anarchism and atheism, that makes for the distinctive libertarian position.

Because libertarianism is the way of life that it is, it finds itself in conflict with authoritarianism, with no hope of ever eliminating authoritarianism from the social scene.

It is from this sort of analysis that libertarians have adopted such slogans as "anarchism without ends," "pessimistic anarchists" and "permanent protest" to describe libertarianism and libertarians.

D. J. I.

LIBERTARIAN SOCIETY

The Libertarian Society engages in the following activities:—

(1) Every Thursday during term, beginning at 1 p.m., a meeting is held in the Philosophy Room at Sydney University. A paper is read and is followed by discussion. The meeting closes by 3 p.m., but private discussion is often continued in Manning House and/or the Richmond Hotel.

(2) Every Monday throughout the year, beginning at 8 p.m., a meeting is held at the Haymarket Club (727 George Street, top floor), at which a paper is read and is followed by discussion.

(3) On Thursday evenings people generally go drinking and end up at the Haymarket Club after 10 o'clock.

(4) At times and places that are convenient for members, the Society meets as a committee to discuss future meetings, general policy, editorial matters in connection with publications, etc. These meetings are usually held at the Haymarket Club and are open to all connected with the Society.

The Society is financed by donations which are made to meet specific items of expenditure, and by the sale of its publications.

The Society's publications are as follows:—

LIBERTARIAN (annual magazine), Nos. 1, 2 and 3 (price 2/- Aust.).
PERMANENT PROTEST (price 1/- Aust.).
Some copies of Broadsheets, Nos. 1 to 5, are available (nix).

The Libertarian Society's postal address is: R. FLECK,
c/o 18 Manson Road, Strathfield, N.S.W.

THE

RED and BLACK

JOURNAL

Sydney anarchists, members of the Libertarian Society, and others are bringing out a monthly journal — first issue April / May, 1960 — called the "**RED and BLACK**".

This journal will offer a critical commentary on local a overseas events from an anti-authoritarian standpoint.

The contents will include comment on political, economic, industrial, sexual, religious and "moral" topics, discussion of social theory, book reviews and correspondence.

The point of view of the "**RED and BLACK**" will be non-authoritarian because the publishers are not members of any political party, nor conformist supporters of the established order. The journal will be free of the dogmas and prejudices of politicians and powerseekers.

It will be published co-operatively by its editors. It has no dividends to pay, no advertisers to placate, and nobody is going to make a profit from it.

Subscriptions are being invited at 15/- for twelve issu (post free). Single issues at 1/3 (post free).

Address all correspondence to:—

P.O. Box 47, KINGSFORD. SYDNEY. New South Wal

(N.B.—We have not repudiated the following:
"Ist die Konstruktion der Zukunft und das Fertigwerden fuer alle Zeiten nicht unsere Sache, so ist desto gewisser, was wir gegenwaertig zu vollbringen haben, ich meine **die ruecksichtslose Kritik alles Bestehenden,** ruecksichtlos sowohl in dem Sinne, dass die Kritik sich nicht vor ihren Resultaten fuerchtet, und ebensowening vor dem Konflikte mit den vorhandenen Maechten."
KARL MARX, 1843).